

E-MANUAL

The Newsletter of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Minneapolis, MN

April 2016

Vol. 62

IN THIS ISSUE

- “Seeking Vision for Our Future”** Page 1
submitted by Pastor Kim Becker
- “An Update from Lydia”** Page 1
by Lydia Detweiler
- “A Metaphor of Atonement”** Page 3
by Pastor Kim Becker
- “5 Reasons Why You Need to Join a Small Group”** Page 5
submitted by Pastor Kim Becker



Seeking Vision for Our Future

submitted by Pastor Kim Becker

A Visioning Committee has been formed by the Church Council to begin the work of seeking vision for the mission, vision, and location of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, and how those tie together. We have had one meeting with Kim and Chris Becker, Kristopher Hartwig, Rob and Mary Haarsager, Mark-Peter Lundquist, Ernie and Marilyn Miller, and Christine Lindell Detweiler present. Kristina Kithinji was unable to attend due to Aaron’s arrival. We will continue meeting on a monthly basis to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit as we move forward as a church joining in God’s mission in Minneapolis.

So far we have read and discussed a resource titled, “Renew 52: Ideas to Change the Church: 50+ Ideas to Revitalize Your Congregation From Leaders Under 50.” We have it in pdf version and can send it to anyone who would like to read it. Email Kim Becker at kbecker@emmanuelmennonitechurch.com if you would like a copy.

Our next meeting will focus on our Identity as Emmanuel Mennonite Church. We will look at a couple more resources that can also be shared with the church. Again, email Kim B if interested. We are open to input from church members. If you have thoughts on mission, vision, and location, and how they tie together you can share with one of the committee members via email and your thoughts will be considered by the committee.

Please keep us in your prayers as we work through the exciting business of what it looks like for EMC to join God in mission. We will share more as we go. Blessings!

An Update from Lydia

by Lydia Detweiler



FAITH. LIFE. ADVENTURE.

Dear Lovely People,

I cannot begin to thank you all enough for the way in which you supported me to complete the most transformative program of my life (so far). I’ve completed my five months with YWAM Destination Paradise, received my Discipleship Training Program (DTS) graduation slip, and have returned to my Minneapolis home. It is very difficult to try and sum up what the past 5 months have been and meant for me, but I can confidently say that I am not the same girl that left Minneapolis last October (2015). Thank the Lord!

Three of the five months of my DTS were spent in San Pedro, Ambergris Caye, Belize. It is incredible how fast strangers become family, a place becomes home, God reveals himself when we tune into him, lives change, and true identities are formed! Lecture Phase was a successful time of “getting right with God”; recognizing his

immeasurable power and love for me, returning to an intimate relationship with him, letting him heal my heart and instill his identity in me. I was extremely blessed to have an amazingly diverse and supportive group of 4 girls living with me in Casita 18 (our little cottage/room that everyone lives in on the base). They became my closest friends and confidantes during the three months in San Pedro. I cannot thank God enough for placing them perfectly in my life, right when I needed them most.

After the three months of lecture in Belize, my team of 12 and I traveled through Central America to get to Costa Rica, and joined in the awesome things God is already doing down there. We were in Costa Rica for approximately 5 weeks (it felt much longer!). The majority of our ministry consisted of clearing a coffee field in order for a mission already established in CR, called Strong Missions, to build their new property. My team spent many long, scorching days picking coffee, cutting down the trees with machetes, and then digging up the roots of said coffee trees. We approximated that we'd dug up 800 roots together as a team. It was very intense! God taught us all a lot about trusting his plan while we worked the field. It was never easy, but we cannot deny how rewarding it was getting down and dirty and learning to trust that God would use our work to further his Kingdom in Costa Rica. We learnt that we were sowing seeds, and would have to learn to be okay with not seeing them reaped.

In addition to the field ministry, we did something called LIFE ministry. It was a simple concept: learn to do life WITH God, recognizing his life changing power within us. We spent days hanging out with locals, praying for them and attempting to love radically like Jesus in whatever way we felt led. During these LIFE ministry times, I learnt that my life can be a ministry when I include Jesus in every little thing that I do. There is great power in seemingly insignificant acts of love and God can use me to show his Glory in countless ways that will look different for each individual. I grew exponentially in my ability to share God's heart with other people and was immensely

encouraged by how much our God cares for all his creation!

As I mentioned in the previous paragraphs, I experienced copious amounts of spiritual maturing and healing, both in Belize and Costa Rica. One of the greatest blessings over DTS, however, happened whilst simply experiencing life with an extraordinary family; learning how to love them in all our differences, being challenged by them in my faith journey, challenging them in their faith journeys, praying for each other, supporting each other, and having the time of our lives together.

I have had the busiest, hardest, most mind blowing, positive experiences of my life from last October to this February! It would be crazy for me to believe that I could have done it without the generous support that I got from both friends and family around the world. Thank you SO MUCH for the part you played in sending me to YWAM, whether in monetary donation or in prayer. I could not have asked for a better opportunity or a better experience. God is so unfathomably good. I would love to share more about my experience, if desired. Shoot me and email or text, and feel free to call. I love sharing what God has done in and through me (and it helps me process it as well!).

In conclusion, I'd like to share what's up next for me. Once I returned from YWAM I had a hard time discerning what the next season of my life would look like. During Lecture and Outreach phase, God gave me more clarity than I've ever had about what his dreams for my life are, and the talents/abilities he's given me to complete such dreams. I came home with dreams of returning to YWAM Destination Paradise to participate in a secondary school (through YWAM still) called Foundation in Counseling Ministries (FCM) and possibly returning to staff. As God often does, he changed it up on me. Instead, he's called me to a season of going to college, and made it clear that this is the necessary time of preparation that he's going to lead me through before I'm ready for my other dreams. While it was definitely an incredibly hard decision to give up YWAM, I'm trusting that God has a much better plan than one I could think up for myself. Therefore, I'll be attending Crown

College, in St. Bonifacius, MN, for the next few years. I'll be majoring in International Studies, with a concentration in Humanities, and a minor/major in Counseling. I would really appreciate continued prayers in my transition back to the US culture and in having an open heart to recognize/accept God's lessons regardless of the season or location.

Much love and peace.

Psalm 13:5, "But I trust in Your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in Your salvation."

You can keep up with Lydia's adventures at her blog: <http://thelastld.blogspot.com/>
She is currently in Mazatlan, Mexico serving at a YWAM base for the next several weeks.

A Metaphor of Atonement

by Pastor Kim Becker

This story is a metaphor of atonement theology I wrote for a class I took in seminary called, "Theological Understandings of Jesus." The class was excellent. It was one of those classes I wish all Christians could take, because it focused on how our atonement theology informs our full theology, in both belief and practice. It also offered new ways to view the cross, looking at how multiple metaphors are imperative to a full understanding of atonement. No one metaphor can be comprehensive enough. So please read this as one of many atonement metaphors.

Can You Hear Me Now?

One day a young girl asked her papa why God sent Jesus to die on the cross for everyone. She couldn't understand why God had to save people through the death of Jesus. Wasn't there another way it could have happened? This is the story the papa told the girl in response to her questions:

You see, dear, it's kind of like this: There once was a great man, we'll just call G, who created everything in all the lands. G loved everyone. I mean everyone. There came a time, though, when the people he loved dearly made a choice that meant he could not be with them in

person any more. Because the people chose to listen to a Liar and did something G had specifically asked them not to, they now had to live with the consequences; he had to send them out of the Perfect Land they all lived in together, into a land that was dirty and hard to live in. This made him very sad, and he really wanted to stay in touch with everyone all the time, and be available to them whenever they needed him. So he gave every one of his people a cell phone that connected directly to his phone. That way they could call him, and each other, anytime they wanted to.

As time went on, the cell phone connections got rather weak. The people's land had been invaded and they were sent out to a land that was not their own. The land they lived in now was so rough and dirty and full of hills and valleys that there was a lot of cell phone interference and it made it hard to hear G and each other on their phones. The people really wanted to hear from G, though. So the people decided that they needed to build a special Tower, that maybe up in the Tower they could have a better connection. And so G told them they could do that, and that it might help for a time. Because they were not in their own land they decided to build a temporary Tower. They hoped to build a more permanent Tower when they were able to return to their own land someday, but for now, they built a temporary Tower in the middle of where they were living.

Because there wasn't room in the top of the Tower for everyone to fit, only certain people were allowed up to where the best reception was. They called this space at the top of the tower the Place of Best Communication. The people made rules, as they were prone to do, about how this would work and chose certain people to go to the Place of Best Communication; only the special Elect could go up to the Place of Best Communication to talk with G. Then the Elect would come back and tell the people what G said. This worked okay for a while. The people made many rules to organize how they live. G had only given them 10 rules, but the people chose to make hundreds more for themselves.

One day the people made it back to their

own dirty land. So the leader of the people wanted to build a new Tower. But G told him no, that he was going to build a different kind of Tower, one not made by human hands. The leader did not understand what G meant. He started to build a great new Tower anyway. But before the Tower was done the leader died. So that man's son ended up being the one who finished the great new Tower. The people were very happy to have a permanent structure where they could communicate in some way with G. Even though only the Elect could go to the Place of Best Communication, it was better than not communicating with G.

But you see, this way of communicating with the people was not really how G wanted it to be, and he didn't really like all the rules people had made for themselves. He really missed how it used to be, way back before the people had listened to the Liar that had messed everything up. He missed talking directly to each person the way he used to. And not only that, but G loved and wanted to know everyone, and wanted them to love each other too, even the enemies of his people, those who had invaded and sent them out of their land. G had to come up with a way to fix things so he could be in relationship with everyone the way he wanted to be, and so they could be in better relationship with each other, too. He decided to send his son J into the land the people lived in in order to fix the communication problems.

J came to the land as a baby, as one of them. He grew up in a normal family, but there was something different about J. He was really the son of G, and he had a special phone to communicate with G that didn't seem to be bothered by the interference that messed up everyone else's reception. No one knew how he had that special phone. Not only that, but J also didn't seem to be covered in the dirt of the land they lived in. He looked cleaner, like the stories they had heard about the people who lived a long time ago with G in the Perfect Land. He taught people how to live better. J showed them that some of the rules they had made were too restrictive, and some rules did not take things far

enough. J modeled a new way to live, more like how G had intended. This upset the Elect who had written and followed the hundreds of rules.

As J grew up he saw that the people needed a way to communicate better with G, they needed to have that special reception he had on his phone. J knew he had to fix things; he was the only one who knew how. The rules they had made for themselves were not helping; they were getting in the way of the kind of relationship G wanted the people to have. J knew that he had to go to the hill where the cell reception tree was and fix things. At that cell reception tree he knew that there was a bad connection. You see, as time had gone on the dirt of the land had built up and mucked up the wires causing reception to get worse and worse. J knew he had to clean it up for the people. He also knew that by taking the wires apart and cleaning them he would be putting his life on the line. The charge of electricity going through the wires was enough to kill him. But J wanted the people to be able to communicate with G again as much as G himself did. He knew his sacrifice would be worth the cost. The Elect thought it was a great idea to have J try to fix the connection. They knew this would end his life, and they saw it as a way to get rid of this guy who spoke against their rules.

So J went up to the hill and climbed the tree. He grabbed the big dirty wires and began to wipe them clean. He cleaned the outside as much as he could. Then he knew it was time to clean the inside connection. He grabbed the junction and pulled it apart. He cleaned the inside connection as the electricity shocked through his system. With his last living act he reconnected the now clean wires. As he did this, the sky went black, the top of the Tower – the Place of Best Communication – crumbled and crashed to the ground, and J proclaimed, "It is finished," as his heart stopped beating. The people watched in awe and horror. Those closest to J ran to him and cried over his body. He had died to help the people regain communication with G.

J was dead for 3 whole minutes before, all of a sudden, he gasped for breath. His heart had

begun beating again! He was back from the dead! The people were amazed and grateful for what J had done. But when he began to speak, he told the people that he could not stay with them any more. He had to go back to G. J had done what he had come to the land to do. The people did not understand why J could not stay with them and were sad. But J told them he was going to send them a friend, called H, who could be with them and help them from there on out with any communication problems and how to live as he had begun teaching them, with less rules. Not only that, but they didn't have to be so dirty. The dirt no longer stuck to them like it did before. They were cleaner, and more like J. He also told them that one day he would come back, and at that time everyone who had made the choice to talk with and be with G, and endeavored to live like J had shown them, would be able to join G and J in the Perfect Land.

All the people of the land, or rather, all the peoples of the lands, now had phones that worked properly again. They did not have to rely on the Elect to communicate for them. And they had better communication with each other, too. The Tower was no longer necessary. Now each person was like a Tower, they each had great communication with G. And G was calling all the people to talk now, even the invaders and people who did not come from the peoples' land. G was reaching out to connect with everyone who made the choice to call him. Soon H came, as J had promised. He was there with the people to give advice and keep them all in good communication with G always. H helped the people live as J had showed them. The people had seen many changes since J had come and they were waiting in anticipation of the day when J would return and bring all those who chose to call G to live together with G, J, and H in the Perfect Land. While they waited, they were figuring out what it meant to share their newly renewed cell phone reception with the other people, the invading people. It was hard, but the people were learning to accept that this is how G and J wanted it to be. G had sent J so that all peoples could communicate with G if they wanted to. H helped them navigate this new way

of living, together, as they eagerly awaited J's return.

When the papa finished his story he asked his granddaughter, "Does this story help you understand why Jesus came and sacrificed himself for us?"

The girl replied, "J loved the people as much as G did, and they wanted the people to be back in good relationship, so he had to do what he could to make that happen. I understand." They sat in silence for a minute thinking about what J had done for everyone. Then the girl said, "It sure was nice that J's friend H came to be with the people and help them learn to love each other while they wait for J to return."

"Yeah, I think so too," he replied.

"Do you think people will ever learn they don't have to build Towers any more? I think some people are still listening to that Liar. Don't they know what Jesus did for us?" the girl asked.

"Yeah.... I don't know. Perhaps we ought to share this story with them," papa said.



5 Reasons Why You Need to Join a Small Group

Adapted from a blog post by Logan Gentry, found at:

<http://logangentry.com/2014/03/12/missional-communities-suffer-without-ltgs/>
Submitted by Pastor Kim Becker

1) BEST PLACE FOR DEEPER STUDY AND QUESTIONS

When people read the Bible, they have difficult questions and very personal questions. A smaller community of 2-11 provides a better context than 12-25 to allow people to ask these questions. Most of the time these questions will never be asked and it's these questions alongside the scriptural answers that provide an understanding that transforms people's lives.

If people don't grasp the Bible, they won't

understand our God the Bible speaks about and lack of understanding is the greatest cause of not loving God and looking like Jesus.

2) **CONFESSION IS NECESSARY FOR CHRIST-LIKE LIVING**

When I imagine confession, I picture a booth where I hide away and don't even see the person who hears my confession. This has no power to free people from bad patterns and sin that plagues them. It also has no power to develop deep and trusting relationships that we need to change and be like Jesus.

The scriptures invite us to confess in order to be freed from lies we believe, freed from pretending to be righteous, and freed from the bad patterns that we have become dependent on. We need to confess, and a smaller group of people like an EMC Small Group creates the space for this to happen naturally.

3) **CHANGE THROUGH TOUGH QUESTIONS IN ACCOUNTABILITY**

We've all made New Year resolutions or resolved to change a part of our lives. If we are left alone to accomplish these, they likely fail. Lasting change that we all seek in different areas of our lives is way easier and more effective when we have people who join us in the journey.

Small Groups create the regular space where questions about our desire to change and our effectiveness can be asked. The good Small Groups don't focus only on the change though, and that's what is tricky about accountability; They focus on the vision for the change, Jesus Christ, and becoming like Him by pursuing and enjoying Him.

If they focus only on the change, again, they likely fail.

4) **REGULAR PRAYER**

Prayer in community deserves its own series of posts, but here I want to mention how amazing it is to pray with people who you trust and have grown to know you intimately. Who else can pray for you so specifically that it feels as though you are interceding for yourself.

The scriptures are filled with the belief that prayer causes more change in the lives of others than even our corrective words. What joy to see change through prayer! A Small Group is a great place for that experience.

5) **COMMUNITY RHYTHMS**

The last thing I'll mention is that I've seen this push people into a rhythm of life of community as opposed to event-based mindset toward the church community. You begin to experience Small Groups as more than a once a week reality and cultivate the relationships that allow for community to happen throughout the week and month, not merely on Sundays.

If you have not yet joined a Small Group at EMC I hope this list of reasons to join is food for thought and will help convince you of the importance of being part of a small group community. Please consider joining one of our newly emerged groups:

- **Life Together at the Beckers'**, meeting at 7 p.m. on the second and fourth Wednesdays of every month – email kbecker@emmanuelmennonitechurch.com for details
- **St. Paul Small Group**, meeting at 1 p. m. at various homes in St. Paul on Sundays once a month – contact Jim Kielsmeier, for details
- **Southside Small Group**, meeting on Thursdays at 7 p.m. – contact Phil Lindell Detweiler, lindet5@gmail.com or 763-222-4847, for details
- **Singing Small Group**, meeting at 1pm at various homes on the second and fourth Sundays of every month – contact Louise Troyer, 507-330-4100 or gltroyer@aol.com, for details
- **Men's Bible Study**, meeting at 6:30 p. m. on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month – contact Phil Lindell Detweiler, lindet5@gmail.com or 763-222-4847, for details
- **Tuesday Breakfast Small Group**, meeting at 7 a.m. on Tuesday mornings at Maria's Café, 1113 E. Franklin Ave, Minneapolis – contact Kristopher Hartwig, babaheidi87@yahoo.com or 651-900-1787, for details